



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH PRESS RELEASE

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Maryland Measles Patient Did Not Spread Disease ***MD Health Officials Urge Continued Vaccination and Vigilance***

Baltimore, MD July 11, 2011 -The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) notified the community last month about a person with measles who could have exposed others in Maryland while infectious. While many people could have been at risk, DHMH announced today that no additional related cases of measles have been identified and that Marylanders should continue to protect themselves with vaccination and vigilance.

"With measles outbreaks in nearby states, this is hardly the moment to be complacent," said Frances Phillips, Deputy Secretary for Public Health Services. "Every Marylander should be up-to-date on measles vaccination."

DHMH and local health departments worked with Maryland health care providers over the past month to investigate illnesses that could have been measles, including illnesses among people who were potentially exposed to the person with measles. All were promptly evaluated and had laboratory testing performed; however, none had measles.

Health department officials note that measles cases continue to be identified in other parts of the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that the country is experiencing a high number of measles cases this year. Measles cases have become more common in the United States. Recent measles outbreaks have been reported in Utah, New York, Minnesota, and Virginia.

"Maryland healthcare providers should be vigilant for possible measles cases," said Secretary Joshua M. Sharfstein. "Quick identification of measles is essential to prevent the spread of this disease."

Measles is a highly contagious viral illness. It is spread through coughing, sneezing and contact with secretions from the nose, mouth and throat of an infected person. Measles symptoms usually appear in two stages. In the first stage, most people have a fever of greater than 101 F degrees, runny nose, watery red eyes and a cough. The second stage begins around the third to seventh day when a rash begins to appear on the face and spreads over the entire body.

Measles can be prevented by vaccination with the safe and effective measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Two doses of MMR are recommended for most individuals with

the first dose given at age 12-15 months and the second prior to kindergarten entry (age 4-6 years).

Maryland last had confirmed measles cases in 2009. There were no confirmed cases identified in Maryland in 2010 or previously in 2011.

For more on measles, go to <http://ideha.dhmmh.maryland.gov/pdf/Measles.pdf> or to <http://www.cdc.gov/measles/>.

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